



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/035,907	12/24/2001	Richard O. Hilson	10011146-1	2166

7590 11/26/2003
AGILENT TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
Legal Department, DL429
Intellectual Property Administration
P. O. Box 7599
Loveland, CO 80537-0599

EXAMINER

MCKANE, ELIZABETH L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
1744	

DATE MAILED: 11/26/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/035,907

Applicant(s)

HILSON ET AL.

Examiner

Leigh McKane

Art Unit

1744

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 07 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 and 40-57 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17-21 and 40-57 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-6, 8-10, 15 and 17 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2, 7, 11-14 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Election/Restrictions

1. Claims 17-21 and 40-57 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in Paper No. 10072003.

2. It is noted that claims 40-57 have been added, ostensibly as depending from claim 1. However, a method claim cannot depend from an apparatus claim. They are considered to be method claims under Group III of the Restriction Requirement. As Group III is a non-elected invention, they are withdrawn from consideration.

Claim Objections

3. Claim 8 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form.

Claim 8 recites a method step "wherein said gas is introduced into said manifold at a pressure of about 60 to about 80 psi." However, claim 8 is dependent upon claim 6, an apparatus claim. A method claim does not properly limit an apparatus claim and therefore, claim 8 is in improper dependent form.

Double Patenting

4. Applicant is advised that should claim 5 be found allowable, claim 16 will be objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate thereof. When two claims in an application

are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

5. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

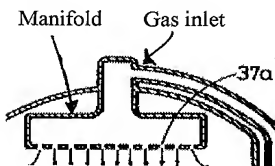
(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

6. Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 15, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takagi (U.S. Patent No. 6,248,672).

With respect to claims 1, 5, 6, and 16, Takagi teaches an apparatus for storing a plurality of vertical supports **8** wherein the apparatus includes a mechanism **2** for diffusively introducing pressurized gas into the apparatus, an outlet element having a plurality of openings **37a** in fluid communication with the mechanism, and a holding chamber **1** disposed such that gas flow therethrough is substantially uniform, the holding chamber having an opening for removing the supports **8** and a plurality of elements **34,39** for holding the supports. See Figures 11-13. As to the intended use recitation in the preamble, “for storing a plurality of supports having a plurality of chemical compounds/biopolymers bound thereto at individual sites thereon,” a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the

claim. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

As to claims 3, 4, and 15, the mechanism 2 includes a gas inlet and a manifold comprising one compartment in fluid communication with the gas inlet. The gas inlet is perpendicular to the axis of the openings 37a in the outlet element. See illustration below.



With respect to claim 8, the apparatus for Takagi is certainly capable of introducing gas at a pressure of 60-80 psi.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 9 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takegi.

As to limitations relating to dimensions of the outlet element, it is generally held that

such limitations are not patentably significant since they at most relate to the size of the article under consideration, which is not ordinarily a matter of invention. In re Yount, 36 C.C.P.A. (Patents) 775, 171 F.2d 317, 80 USPQ 141.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 2, 7, and 11-14 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: Although Takegi teaches an apertured 37a element for dispersing air, a separate flow-straightening element is not disclosed. Moreover, Takegi neither teaches nor suggests that the gas inlet comprises a valve.

Conclusion

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Leigh McKane whose telephone number is 703-305-3387 until December 15, 2003. After December 15, 2003 the examiner can be reached at 571-272-1275. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Wednesday (7:15 am-4:45 pm).

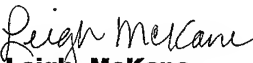
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert J. Warden can be reached on 703-308-2920 or at 571-272-1281 after December 15, 2003. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Application/Control Number: 10/035,907

Page 6

Art Unit: 1744

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0661.


Leigh McKane
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1744

elm
19 November 2003